Lunch and Speech - Mayfair Association
October 15, 1963 - Park Lane Hotel

I feel fortunate to be ~~I am honored by being considered~~ at least a transient, though foreign, occupant of Mayfair. It is one of those famous localities ~~locations~~ whose charming atmosphere has survived a series of physical alterations, amounting, during the last war, almost to convulsions.

When I first came to London, Devonshire House and Lansdowne House were still existent, as were a half score of other notable town palaces within a stone's throw from here. The power to tax has proved to be the power to destroy such great private dwellings.

Much as one laments some changes that have necessarily taken place in a neighborhood which, in the judgment of Sydney Smith "enclosed more intelligence and ability, to say nothing of wealth and beauty, than the world had ever before collected into such a place," we must remember that Mayfair, in addition to its reputation for fashionable residences, has also long been a commercial area of worldwide repute.

In fact as early as 1709 there were complaints that the annual ~~animal~~ fair seemed to be overdevoted to "musick, drinking, gaming, ruffling, lotteries, stage plays and drolls." ~~A question is posed to my Embassy as to whether we should follow such hallowed customs.~~

I realize there are differing opinions about the architectural merit of the American office building on Grosvenor Square. They have not, however, distracted me from constant gratitude for the privilege of passing my working hours in the same confines as do other Mayfair Associates.

Indeed, I am far better circumstanced than was my earliest predecessor as the diplomatic representative of the United States at the Court of St. James's. John Adams was sent in 1785 by President George Washington to London, where he wisely engaged a house on the corner of Grosvenor Square and Brook Street.

His professional standing occasioned him considerable trepidation. On the eve of being presented to the Queen he read, in the leading newspaper, the following:

"An Ambassador from America! Good heavens what a sound! The Gazette surely never announced anything so extraordinary before, nor one on a day so little expected. This will be such a phenomenon in the Corps Diplomatique that 'tis hard to say which can excite indignation most, the insolence of those who appoint the character or the meanness of those who receive it."

In my own case, almost a hundred and eighty years later, I suffer from no such apprehensions. I confess myself so content in Mayfair that the prospect of ever quitting it is the only flaw in my happiness.

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and his policy in Yemen wrong. By inference, our own policy toward Yemen is almost equally wrong.

Professor Fred Nichols, of the University of Virginia, came to see me. He has done a fascinating pamphlet on Thomas Jefferson as an architect, which I have lately been reading with pleasure. He told me he thought Staunton Hill which he visited several years ago, was the most interesting neo-Gothic house in America.

We had a dinner at home tonight for

Mr. and Mrs. John Gunther
Mr. Michael and Lady Pamela Berry
Madame Bousquet
William Clark
John Crosby

Carmen Esnault Pelterie and her son, Michel, arrived late last night, to stay with us.

I have had a letter from Philip de Zulueta, containing the following message from the Prime Minister, in connection with my letter of sympathy to him:

> "The Prime Minister has asked me to write on his behalf to thank you very warmly for your letter. Mr. Macmillan was most grateful to you for having sent it and very touched that you should have written as you did. As you will understand, he cannot at the moment answer you personally but he is sure that you will understand that his gratitude is nevertheless very heartfelt."

October 17, 1963 - Thursday

Was at the shooting school near Northolt Airport at 9:00 a.m. Shot 100 shells at clay pigeons off the towers. Also, for the first time, was introduced to simulated hare shooting. In this, they propel large clay disks at high speed over a piece of grass. It is tricky work, since there all sorts of bumps and eccentric turns.

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Jean Monnet came to the office this morning and spent an hour and a half. He thinks the two great questions now are (1) nuclear arms for Europe; (2) the Common Market agricultural policy and its relationship to the United States. As to (1), he is firmly opposed to the United States assisting France to improve its posture as an independent nuclear power. He believes whatever we do should be in the way of helping and cooperating with a European complex in which no European nation has its own national deterrent.

As to the agricultural policy, he is hopeful that Erhard, in his induction speech tomorrow, will propound the proposition he has in mind. It involves a link between industrial and agricultural products--there would be an agreed amount, for instance, of American agricultural exports for a period of say five years, based on some relationship with the historical pattern of trade.

We had a lunch at home today for Mr. and Mrs. Sekers, Madame Bousquet, Captain Molyneux, Bertie and Jane Bell. Bell, a cousin of Evangeline's, is an independent adviser to American wine importing companies and does a lot of selection, especially for my favorite shop, Sherry, Wine & Spirits, in New York. Eddie has bought a house in New York on East 52nd Street, with [redacted] a large garden. He says his carnation gardens surrounding his villa in the hills back of Antibes are doing splendidly. He is still engaged in buying modern pictures, of which he has built up a large store, especially since selling his former collection of Impressionists. He has a remarkable eye for attractive paintings, and an obsession about painting. The Sekers are an unusual couple. [redacted] An emigrant from Hungary, he has not yet succeeded in fully mastering the English language. He is an enlightened philanthropist who has done a great deal here for music and opera.

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Dr. John Scott Everton, Vice President, Education and World Affairs, and Executive Director, Overseas Educational Service, was brought to see me by De Myers. He said that about 3,000 American professors and teachers would be required for service abroad next year. Myers has completed his negotiations to go out and take charge of the University at Addis Ababa.

Harrison Lewis, once Consul General at Bremen when I was in Germany, now on his way to Malta as Consul General, came to see me.

I dined tonight with Lord Home at 1, Carlton Gardens. The dinner was in honor of Prince Souvanna Phouma, Prime Minister of Laos.

It was a small party, consisting, besides the host and Souvanna Phouma, of the Laotian Ambassador, George Drew (the Canadian High Commissioner), General Sir Richard Hull (Chief of the Imperial General Staff), and several Foreign Office men, including Oliver Wright. Called a working meal, conversation was preceded by a stately flow of dishes and wines. We did, however, shortly get down to business. The Prince is a quick-witted, [redacted] attractive, thick-set fellow, with a decided taste, I gather, for French culture. He told me he has a small place near St. Tropez, where he will spend a few days before going on to Moscow and New Delhi.

His account of the present situation in his co[redacted]t e[redacted]couraging. He hoped for neutralism, but has no real faith that h[redacted]er would permit it. Home and Gromyko are Co-Chairmen, charge[redacted]the responsibility of ensuring compliance with the 14-nation treaty of peace and neutrality. There continue to be outbreaks of violence.

The International Control Commission is constituted of Canadian, Polish [redacted]ndian representatives. The Pole, like the Indian has been uncooperative. I have read thousands of pages of telegrams on conditions there in the past few years, and,

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perhaps stupidly, feel that no local solution is possible--all depends on the larger events in adjoining areas.

I questioned Souvanna Phouma about de Gaulle's statement advocating union of the two Vietnams. He is much in favor of this, and thinks Ho Chi Minh would welcome such an understanding, despite any objection from the Chinese. This could be part of a general agreement to neutralize Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos.

His assumption that Ho Chi Minh would not gobble up an united Vietnam appears to me unrealistic.

I do, however, question the assumption of our military that the South Vietnamese will win the war within the next eighteen months. I heard the same sort of optimism expressed by the French for years about Indo-China.

[redacted]

I sat next to General Hull, and found him delightful.

Alec Home left immediately after the last glass of port. With a twinkle in his eye, he said to me: "I have an entirely different sort of business to transact." The newspapers are full of comment on whether or not he will be the next Prime Minister--there is no appearance of anxiety on his part one way or the other.

October 18, 1963 - Friday

I went to Bath on the noon Pullman, intending to go this afternoon to Bristol, where I was to attend a dinner given by the Society of Merchant Venturers. Under the mistaken impression that I was slated to make a speech, I had done some research into the history and activities of this organization. I have always been intrigued by the Chartered Companies of Great Britain, only one of which,

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the Hudson's Bay Company, headed by Tony Keswick, is still operative in a business sense.

I found I was not listed as a speaker. Rab Butler was to be featured, but he, poor fellow, with his political fate in the balance, begged off yesterday.

After putting up at the Francis Hotel, I motored the twelve miles from Bath to Bristol, there to be received by Mr. Hewer, an eminently lively [redacted] man, at a sherry party given by the English Speaking Union for the American Fulbright Scholars of the University of Bristol. There were about 30 such Americans, and one could well be proud of them.

We left, Hewer and myself, about 7:30 for the Merchant Venturers, who having been bombed out of their historic premises, are now possessors of two large houses, conjoined, and furnished with some magnificent articles, including masses of silver and silver-gilt, the finest eighteenth century glass chandeliers--seven of them--I have ever seen, and a variety of mementoes of their more than four hundred years of existence. By a stroke of luck, or managerial prescience, the officers [redacted] removed, during the Blitz period, almost the totality of the Society's possessions only two hours before the destruction of their headquarters by German bombing. Of 120 Chippendale dining room chairs, they [redacted] saved 102. In addition, their Chinese Chippendale chairs of museum quality were all evacuated.

Perhaps because Bristol is the home of the Harvey wine merchants, the pre-dinner drink at the Venturers was sherry or champagne. I was introduced to a medley of people dressed in white ties and glittering with decorations, including Masters, Ex-Masters, Sheriffs, Treasurers of the Company, as well as the fox-hunting Duke of Beaufort, a tall pillar of the Society.

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We must have been a hundred at table. The only female present--and that for the first time--was the Lord Mayor.

I have seldom sat through a meal so prolonged, for we only rose from table at midnight. It was well I did not speak, for the subject matter of the addresses was local, although, as is usual in British after-dinner speaking, they were light, amusing, and, in one case, of the highest order of aptness and humour.

The dinner, provided by caterers, was the product of careful planning. We started with Bristol Channel oysters, went on to turtle soup, turbot with lobster sauce, Tournedos Rossini, Soufflé Milanaise, cheese, dessert, coffee, Rhine wine, sherry, Château Mouton Rothschild 1953, Krug champagne 1952, Sandeman's Port 1945, another sherry, and Cognac.

I sat between the Master (Commander A. Paul Bush, DSO, and RN) and the Senior Warden (Mr. J. H. Britton) who will shortly succeed as Master. It was he who made a singularly felicitous speech pitched in just right key. His fortune comes from a shoe business that he inherited and expanded. He said his greatest frustration arises from his inability, because of crushing income taxes on his employees' salaries, to provide them with incentive, knowing it was unlikely they could accumulate capital.

The Vice Chancellor of Bristol University, Sir Philip Morris, spoke twice, and did it well.

I reached Bath about 2:00 a.m.

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October 19, 1963 - Saturday

Like yesterday, beautiful weather. I visited the antique shops, but bought nothing. Mrs. Angell told me she had sold, a few years ago, a bed made of narwahl tusks--it must have been a curious contrivance. She is going to search for tusks for me. I coveted a pair of Heppelwhite chairs in the French manner, but found them priced at 650 pounds.

Took the noon train to London, on which I read and lunched peacefully.

I spent some time this afternoon, preparing a telegram on Lord Home's ascension which was announced this morning.

October 20, 1963 - Sunday

Went to the office, revised and sent off my telegram as follows:

The political staff at the Embassy is turning out a multitude of despatches. The new Cabinet members will be announced this afternoon.

It rained hard all day. When I called the attention of Bob Smith (the chauffeur) to the change in weather, he said "I like it like this--I find it soothing."

The new members of the Cabinet were announced this afternoon. Selwyn Lloyd becomes Lord Privy Seal, vice Ted Heath, who takes over the Board of Trade, as well as additional and important duties in the economic field. Macleod and Powell refused to go along, and Rab Butler as Foreign Secretary is the most important choice.

I wrote various notes this afternoon (1) to congratulate Alec Home, (2) to congratulate Rab Butler, (3) to felicitate John Wyndham on being given a barony (he will inherit another when his 80-year old father dies), and (4) to Philip de Zulueta, on being made a Knight.

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